What is claimed is:

1. A method of dispatching an IP datagram comprising socks traffic on a socks server, in an Internet Protocol (IP) network comprising a plurality of socks servers, said IP datagram comprising an IP header comprising a Type Of Service (TOS) field, said method comprising the steps of:

in a socks dispatcher:

- retrieving the value of a Type Of Service (TOS) field from the IP header of the IP datagram; and

- selecting a socks server \ referring to a first table \, said first table defining for each value of the TOS field one or a plurality of socks servers.

2. The method according to claim1 wherein said IP datagram is sent by an IP network device with a given priority, and wherein said step of retrieving the value of the Type Of Service (TOS) field is followed by the further step of:

in the socks dispatcher:

- determining the priority of the IP datagram by referring to a second table, said second table defining a priority for each value of the Type Of Service (TOS) field.

3. The method according to claim 2 wherein said IP datagram comprises data according

to a given application level protocol, said step of determining the priority of the IP datagram comprising the further step of:

- determining the application level protocol of data transported in said IP datagram by referring to said second table , said second table defining a priority and an application level protocol for each value of the Type Of Service (TOS) field .

4. The method according to claims 1 or 2 wherein in case of congestion in one or a plurality of output queues, said step of determining the priority of the IP datagram is followed by the further steps of:

- discarding in said one or plurality of output queues IP datagrams having the lowest priority until there is no more congestion, and

- discarding the IP datagram when said IP datagram compared with IP datagrams in said one or plurality of output queues, has the lowest priority.

5. The method according to claims 1 or 2 wherein said first table comprises for each sock server :

- an identifier , preferably an address,
- one or a plurality of TOS field values ,
- optionally, a sock server capacity ,
- optionally, application level protocols supported by the socks server.

6. The method according to claim 2 comprising the initial steps of:

- configuring said first and second tables,
- defining a default socks server for values of the Type Of Service (TOS) field not defined in the first table, and
- defining a default priority and optionally a default application level protocol for values of the Type Of Service (TOS) field not defined in the second table.

7. The method according to claims 1 or 2 wherein the step of selecting a socks server referring to a first table, said first table defining for each value of the Type Of Service (TOS) field one or a plurality of socks servers, comprises the further steps of:

- determining the number of socks servers defined for the value of the Type Of Service (TOS) field retrieved from the IP datagram:

    - if only one socks server is defined in the first table, forwarding the IP datagram to said socks server, and

    - if more that one socks server is defined in the first table, forwarding the IP datagram to a socks server selected according to its capacity and the priority of the IP datagram.

8. A socks dispatcher comprising:
an ip network comprising a plurality of socks servers, and
an IP datagram comprising an IP header, said IP header comprising aType of Service (TOS) field wherein said socks dispatcher

retrieves a value of said TOS field from the IP header of the IP datagram, and

selects a socks server referring to a first table, said first table defining for each value of the TOS field, one or a plurality of socks servers.

9. A dispatcher according to claim 8 further comprising an IP network device wherein said IP datagram is sent by said IP network device with a given priority, and wherein said retrieving step is followed by a step of:

determining the priority of the IP datagram by referring to a second table, said second table defining a priority for each value of the Type of Service (TOS) field.

10. A computer program product having computer readable program code for dispatching an IP datagram comprising socks traffic on a socks server, in an Internet Protocol (IP) network comprising a plurality of socks servers, said IP datagram comprising an IP header comprising a Type Of Service (TOS) field, said computer readable program code comprising the steps of:

in a socks dispatcher:

- computer readable program code means for retrieving the value of a Type Of Service (TOS) field from the IP header of the IP datagram; and

- computer readable program code means for selecting a socks server referring to a first table, said first table defining for each value of the TOS field one or a plurality of socks servers.

11. The computer program product according to claim10 wherein said IP datagram is sent by an IP network device with a given priority, and wherein said step of retrieving the value of the Type Of Service (TOS) field is followed by the further step of:

in the socks dispatcher:

- computer readable program code means for determining the priority of the IP datagram by referring to a second table, said second table defining a priority for each value of the Type Of Service (TOS) field.